The Cleveland Museum of Art

Press Release

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BRITAIN'S RENOWNED TEXTILE DESIGNER KAFFE FASSETT TO LECTURE AND CONDUCT WORKSHOPS

Look at the world around you, at the colors that exist together in nature — and above all, look at the way colors work in decorative objects, in tapestries and porcelains and mosaics, [wrote Fassett].

It changed the way I looked at knitting; it changed the way I looked at the world.

— Perri Klass, on Kaffe Fassett
Los Angeles Times Magazine

CLEVELAND — Acclaimed designer, author, and knitter Kaffe Fassett will present a lecture and workshops on his groundbreaking approach to color and craft at the Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA). Organized by the Textile Art Alliance (TAA), a CMA affiliate group, these public events will take place Nov. 11 through 15.

Fassett has created collections for fashion designers Missoni and Bill Gibb, and knitted commissions for such celebrities as Barbra Streisand, Lauren Bacall, John Schlesinger, Shirley Maclaine, and Candace Bergen. He is the first living textile artist to be honored by a retrospective exhibition of his work at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London (1988-89), and has been profiled in such major publications as the British *Vogue* and the *Los Angeles Times Magazine.* His numerous publications include the hugely popular *Glorious Knits and Glorious Needlepoint.* Two new books will be released in Oct. 1999: *Welcome Home Kaffe Fassett* and *Mosaics: Inspiration and Original Projects for Interiors and Exteriors.*

Kaffe Fassett's artistic origins began with painting, which he started at the age of four, and then, as he puts it, he "painted like he breathed, like other kids would play baseball." A career-changing trip to Scotland with Bill Gibb shifted his creative energies to knitting, when he was captivated by the colors in the landscape, hues that were the same as those in the yarns spun in Scottish mills. After buying 20 shades of Shetland wool, he persuaded a fellow passenger on the train back to London to teach him to knit. That first design created *en route* appeared in the British *Vogue*. Fassett would later write, "The first thing you have to do when knitting with colors … is clear your mind of some inhibiting preconceptions and prejudices that have built up over the years. For instance, I never worry about running out of yarn and mixing dye lots, and I often combine all sorts of yarns in the same garment."

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As a master of needlepoint, Fassett has created numerous kits for Great Britain's Ehrman Tapestry and designed two five-foot-square needlepoint tapestries for the luxury retailers Marks & Spencers, as well as tufted rugs for Christopher Farr Hand-Made Rugs. Fassett's latest focus is quilting, and he has designed a range of handwoven Indian Stripes now available through England's Westminster Fibers.

Accompanying Fassett will be Brandon Mably, his studio manager and personal assistant. An established and highly talented textile designer, Mably's first knitting design, "Great Plains," published in *Rowan Magazine*, earned him enthusiastic fans in his own right. Mably has worked with Fassett for five years, and teaches his "Color and Design" workshops.

Lecture, Book Signing, and Workshop Schedule

On **Friday, Nov. 12 at 7 p.m.** Fassett will show 80 slides during his lecture, *Glorious Inspiration: Transcending Tradition and Culture in Textile Design*, which will demonstrate how he takes color ideas from his worldwide travels and translates them into different designs. Slides showing knitting, needlepoint, quilting, wallpapers, and rag rugs will be included. A **book signing** will take place before and after the lecture. Fees for the lecture are $20 for the general public, $15 for CMA members, and $10 for TAA members. The lecture will be in Gartner Auditorium. Tickets are available from the CMA Ticket Center at (216) 421-7350 or 1-888-CMA-0033. Service fees apply on all phone orders.

Nov. 11 through 14 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Brandon Mably (with Kaffe Fassett) will instruct **two sets of identical 2-day knitting workshops** open to knitters of all skill levels. The first workshop will be Thursday and Friday, Nov. 11 and 12, and the second workshop will be Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 13 and 14. Mably will instruct participants on the use of color and design, working from source material and a wide range of Rowan Yarns to inspire a sharper observation of color. The cost for each of the workshops is $350 ($275 for TAA members) and each is limited to 25 spaces. All participants should bring the following:

- knitting needles — the size most comfortable to the participant; a wide range of yarn weights will be provided
- scissors
- crochet hooks
- any odd balls of colorful yarn participants may have
- camera for any photographs they may wish to take

On **Monday, Nov. 15 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**, Kaffe Fassett (assisted by Brandon Mably) will conduct a **quilting workshop** in which each participant will construct a patchwork quilt design, emphasizing the use of color. Sewing machines are not required. The cost of this workshop is $275 ($150 for TAA members) and it is limited to 30 spaces.

Registration for all workshops opens for TAA members Sept. 15; to the general public Sept. 30. For more information about attending any of the workshops, call Karen Thompson in the Textile Department at (216) 421-7340, ext. 256.

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